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VSA Profile

The Veterinary Students Association (VSA) was established in 1986 in the faculty of Veterinary medicine, University of Nairobi. Members of VSA are students pursuing Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine Degree. Since its establishment the number of members has drastically increased due to continued increase in the number of students admitted to the BVM. The patron of the association is the dean of the faculty of veterinary medicine. VSA organizes a series of events in each academic year which include; Sports, Career days, field days and farmers outreach and extension programmes.

Our major partner is the Kenya Veterinary Association which usually organizes scientific conferences annually where members of VSA are legible to attend. We also have sponsors for our events that mainly include the Veterinary pharmaceutical companies and other stakeholders. Through their support VSA has been able carry out many events especially the field days where they donate drugs and other vital veterinary equipment.

We are determined to achieve greater heights and be recognized internationally through the International Veterinary Students Association (IVSA) which is based in Denmark.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine is one constituent of the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences [CAVS]. Situated about 15 Kilometers westwards of Nairobi City, the environment is conducive to scholarly undertaking. Training in Veterinary Medicine started with Diplomas in 1942 under the umbrella of Makerere University. The Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine [BVM] programme was launched in July 1962 under the then University of East Africa. In July 1970, following the dissolution of the University of East Africa, the Faculty became fully fledged and part of University of Nairobi. The Fac-

ulty grew through the 1960' and 1970's and was mainly supported by countries such as USA, Germany and Norway to name a few. To date it is the only Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Kenya. It has a considerable human resource base comprising Professors, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers and other PhD holders as well as other cadre of staff in support of its core functions. Since inception, the Faculty has trained many veterinarians and postgraduates for Kenya, and other African countries in addition to some nationals of a few western countries. Currently, some of the Faculty's alumni occupy high positions in the corporate world and others in the Diaspora.

The teaching Departments are five (5) and in addition, there is large farm used both for teaching good farming practices and also production of milk, poultry, pigs and sheep. Since its inception, the Faculty has continued to diversify its teaching in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the field of Veterinary Medicine. In conjunction with the School of Medicine, the Faculty trains Biomedical Scientist, thus allowing Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma holders to enroll for a degree in this emerging discipline where the demand is now increasing among Hospitals, Diagnostic Laboratories and Research Institutions. The Faculty has a BSc programme in Wildlife Sciences with specialization options in

Conservation, Wetlands, Tourism and Fisheries.

Several Postgraduate programmes (MSc and PhD) are available so that every Department has one or more programs per discipline. A Diploma in Animal Health and Production is offered as a three-year program to allow certificate holders from the AHITI's ascend and even enroll for a Bachelors degree in Veterinary Medicine. Short Certificate courses are offered in various Departments. Consultancy and other services are offered to various individual or corporate customers and are department based. These details are available at the Departments.

The Faculty attracts donor funding to engage in relevant research. In recognizing the world as a global village and the need to address current issues and trends, the Faculty collaborates with peer National and International Training and Research Institutions. During the last Academic year the Faculty for the first time sent four (4) 4th year BVM students on an exchange program to Universities and Veterinary Clinics USA. The faculty also hosted two Veterinary students from a Veterinary School in the USA. This will continue into the future and will further help to benchmark the training and research for relevance. This strengthens useful networks and helps to keep standards that will sustain our vision which is " To be a Leading Centre of Excellence in Education, Training, Research, Outreach and Consultancy in Veterinary, Biomedical, Wildlife, Fish, Environmental and Allied Management Sciences."

Prof. Charles Mulei, Dean FVM

Word from the Chairman



The Veterinary Students Association has witnessed tremendous growth since its inception. Having been founded in 1986 with only a handful of members, the vision has never died and there has always been

step by step development in the core values of the VSA. With determination and focus, VSA has always worked towards the welfare of its members who are veterinary students. The continued increase in the intake of the students has also contributed to the growth of VSA. For instance in the recent years, the intake has increased to up to about 150 students. Being the only institution offering the Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, we expect further increase in the intake although the facilities also pose a challenge.

This year in April, we marked our fiftieth (50th) anniversary which was well commemorated by a jubilee celebration and exhibition at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences. There were many stakeholders who participated in this event. VSA was fully represented by members taking part in the exhibition

The fact that VSA plays a very vital role in career development and creating links for its members cannot be overemphasized. We have been able to bridge the gap between the students and the potential employers through various events such as careers days where we have invited various stakeholders to interact with the students.

We intent to work closely with the International Veterinary Students Association (IVSA) to ensure

that members are able to attend various international conferences and get to learn what goes on in different parts of the globe pertaining the veterinary science. We look forward to bringing back the exchange programmes where students will be able learn about various Universities offering Veterinary Medicine.

Our dream is to have an association which shall be recognized world- wide as being a player in improved livestock production and addressing food security. We are currently in the process of looking for partners who will make us realize our dream.

Long life VSA!

Jaffery Jabir O.

VSA Chairman

VSA OFFICIALS

2011/2012

Tanui Richard-	<i>Chairman</i>
Daniel Korir-	<i>Vice Chairman</i>
Jeffrey Kyalo-	<i>Secretary General</i>
Topisia Kipetwan	<i>Treasurer</i>
Korir Phelemon-	<i>Academic Director</i>
Jaffery Jabir O-	<i>Publications Director</i>
Sammy Odhiambo Fred	<i>IVSA Director</i>
Festus Muruga Kinyanjui	<i>East Africa Director</i>
Miheso Kevin-	<i>5th Year Class rep</i>
Maurice Karani Murungi-	<i>4th Year Class rep</i>
Patricia Mbaire Wandia	<i>3rd Year Class rep</i>
Tare Philip-	<i>2nd Year Class rep</i>
Mbaabu Christine Makena-	<i>1st Year Class rep</i>

2012/2013

Jaffery Jabir O-	<i>Chairman</i>
Jeffrey Kyalo-	<i>Vice Chairman</i>
Festus Muruga Kinyanjui-	<i>Secretary General</i>
Patricia Mbaire Wandia	<i>Treasurer</i>
Wamaitha Moses	<i>Projects Director</i>
Bore John	<i>Academic Director</i>
Eston Were	<i>5th Year Class rep</i>
Evaristo Malenje	<i>4th Class rep</i>
Kwobah Emma	<i>3rd Year Class rep</i>
Edward Kariuki	<i>2nd Year Class rep</i>

How unique is the

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine?

There is only one faculty of veterinary medicine in Kenya that is at the University of Nairobi. This is to say that all veterinary doctors who studied in Kenyan University have gone through this faculty. It is also the oldest faculty at the University of Nairobi having been originated from Makerere University in the 1940s. It also admitted students from other countries in Africa with the highest number being from South Africa. For instance, in the 2011/2012 academic there we about six students from South Africa admitted to Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine.

The faculty of veterinary medicine has produced prominent personalities. For instance, the deputy vice chancellor Administration and Finance, University of Nairobi, Professor Mbithi was once the dean faculty of veterinary medicine. Furthermore, the current Deputy Vice Chance of Egerton University Administration and Finance, professor Munene was until 2011 October the dean faculty of veterinary medicine university of Nairobi. We cannot forget the late Professor Wangari Maathai who was once the chair of the department of Veterinary Anatomy and Physiology at Chiromo Campus. We are proud to be associated with this faculty!

Sadie Chronicles

Dogs have a stage called the cute stage, that is, the stage when a dog finally grows into their body and start feeling out nicely and people say how cute the dog is. It is thought all dog had a cute stage until Sadie came along. Sadie is my one year old mongrel (and I say this with love) who is still growing into his body and I am beginning to think he might never reach his “cute” stage. When he was young, Sadie was the silent one, the creepy one...he had this way of sneaking up on people and startling you when you least expected. When he was little Sadie always had this sad expression on his face, like someone stole his favorite toy and thus the name Sad face or in short Sadie!

We always said that Sadie was strange, in the beginning it was just something we said to explain the fact that Sadie didn't seem to fit in with his litter mates. Sadie was the loner, always wandering off on his own and refusing to engage in any sort of play with his mates. At some point we thought he was sick but no disease could be diagnosed and well, he was the healthy one, growing well and gaining weight way faster than other puppies. We never realized just how disturbed Sadie was till the day he showed up at the door with a kitten...in his mouth. It was the first time we saw Sadie smile, a really big grin on his face like he'd just hit the jackpot. It was also the day we started seriously considering getting Sadie into therapy.

We had a burial for the kitten and prayed a lot that night that no one would come on our door knocking asking about a kitten they had lost. And just to clarify, by burial I mean we “put” the dead kitten in a pit latrine. That day we knew we were headed for trouble. Sadie was depressed for a few days before he discovered that clothes and shoes tasted even better. In one night he shredded a new pair of shoe my neighbour had bought her son to go to school with, decided that the clothes we had left out to dry made a very nice pillow and made a chew toy out of our door mat.

We tried training to make him more responsible but after weeks Sadie still thought that sit means jump and if someone tells you “No” in a mean voice you can always bite them and get away with it.. Sadie is not your everyday kind of dog I guess that is what makes him Sadie. He does whatever he wants to do, shows up at the door smelling like he bathed in sewage and we love him all the same. He spend his days looking up at birds in the trees, expecting that one will just fall out of the sky into his mouth. Sadie makes responsible dog ownership look like a Pharmacology PhD course where the proposal just gets being stamped on day after day.

Sadie is stubborn and to say the truth very creepy but I guess each dog is different. He has a spunky personality, it makes him stands out and irritates every one of our neighbours but for all his faults Sadie is loyal. We are his pack...or family if you prefer to call it that, he'd never let anything happen to us. If he could that dog could give up his life to save one of his own and that to my family is what makes Sadie special.

The Role of Veterinary Science in achieving food Security

“Food safety exists when all people at all time have physical and economic access to sufficient safe, nutritious food to meet dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” FAO 1996-Rome declaration.

Food security is no longer just about quantity of food but includes other factors especially nutrition and safety. The safety and nutritious value of the food a nation is producing of great significance. This is where the vet comes in. Vet medicine is no longer just about treating animals but has taken on a greater role. They are multifunctional professionals who contribute immensely towards maintaining society’s health. With improved animal health services there are healthy productive animals that make important contributions to food production, income generation, job creation and poverty alleviation.

Livestock play an essential role in food production. Livestock and fish production in particular make a strong contribution as a source of energy protein with a high nutritional value. Livestock production is also a source of income to those engaged in production, processing and marketing chains at national and even international levels and ultimately contributes to the country’s GDP. The vet sector is therefore one of the guarantors of food stability through the activities it deploys at each level.

Vets make the most direct contribution to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by decreasing the number of people below the minimum dietary energy consumption requirements. The profession is so diverse, the vets take care of pets, livestock and poultry, sporting and lab animals and protect humans against animal borne diseases. It’s practically the profession we depend on for food, health and our animals’ health. Though vet contributes development of growth at both national and global levels, its contributions are largely unappreciated especially in the developing countries which still have a long way to go especially in achieving food security as focus is still on controlling diseases.

As a nation we still face many challenges as vet does not get the recognition it deserves in order to achieve its role in food security. There’s inadequate active surveillance to detect emerging diseases, and country wide vaccinations don’t have the urgency and importance required. Also many young vets are opting out into other professions and consequently there is a lag in what should be delivered. As a developing country our focus in animal health is still on eliminating diseases that are significant food safety hazards and are a challenge to both human and animal health e.g. brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis and subsequently human tuberculosis, avian influenza, foot and mouth, glanders etc.

Although we have a long way to go as a country in achieving food security, food safety and nutrition, I believe we have made steps in the right direction and the vet profession if given the assistance and recognition

by the government, the journey would not be quite as long. We as vets should take the initiative and show that we can contribute towards combating food insecurity. Change begins with you.

RUTH KOGOS (4TH BVM.)

The experience of First Year vet Student

The veterinary profession like any other field has it numerous challenges and it is only by understanding these challenges that one can be able to succeed. Most of us join this field without having any clue of what it is all about. In the villages (where a majority of us come from) the mention of veterinary medicine brings the picture of needle and syringe which are meant for a sick animal precisely, a cow!

During the first year of study, you are introduced to anatomy, physiology, histology and biochemistry. Everything is totally new and every word you here is a vocabulary since it may be the first time you are hearing it. For instance, in the case of anatomy, you only get the prepositions, adverbs etc. Here, your high school grammar makes little sense since some most of the words will not be found in the Advanced Learners Oxford dictionary that you might have come with. You are told to use the medical dictionary or the Veterinary Dictionary to be precise. By the end of the first month, some of your colleagues have done interfaculty transfer because they are unable to bear. You cannot quit because back at home you have already declared that you shall be a vet doctor and your shall be called Dr. so and so.

You persevere and work tooth to nail not leaving anything to chance because your conscience now tells you that you are an endangered species. After doing the end of year university exams, you go home and everybody is happy to see you. You are the only one who knows what you have gone through as it said that it is the wearer of the shoe who knows where it pinches most. Looking for an attachment is another huddle ahead and being a first year, the only possible place you can go to is the DVO’s office where you cannot do much since you have only learnt anatomy, physiology, histology and biochemistry. You become more or less an assistant of the animal health assistant to whom you are assigned by the DVO.

Within the first month of the attachment, your friend calls you to inform you that the results for the exams you did are out. The first thing that comes to the mind is how many question you were able to answer correctly. Prior to the exams you had been told that the pass mark is 50% and maybe the cats were not quite well with you. At this juncture, you have to gain courage and go for the results. When you get to the students record office, you are given the result slip which is folded. There is only one important statement: “PROCEED TO SECOND YEAR” There you have it! You have made it! Goodbye to Chiromo. You have booked a ticket to UK not United Kingdom but **Upper Kabete!**

Veterinary Vaccines in Promotion of Animal Health

Infectious disease continues to be one of the major factors contributing to reduced animal production in Kenya. Out of the many available means to combat these diseases, vaccination has proved to be the most effective, cost efficient method used to prevent and control infectious diseases.

If it came down to a choice between vaccines and drugs in prophylaxis, vaccines would be better preferred. This is because drugs have the disadvantages of there being the risk of

development of drug resistant pathogens, presence of harmful side effects, presence of drug residues in animal products and their cost. Vaccines have also been proved to be effective in eradicating and preventing viral diseases of which chemotherapy has proven to be ineffective.

The earliest attempt at vaccination was in 1721 against small pox in Human beings. The first 'man made' vaccine was developed by Louis Pasteur in 1885. It was a live attenuated vaccine against rabies. From then onwards several classes of vaccines have been developed and their use has spread to use in veterinary medicine and the protection of animal health. These classes include live virulent vaccines, Live attenuated vaccines, killed vaccines and the use of synthetic peptides as vaccines. Progress has also been made in delivery systems and methods of production.

Vaccines have been developed for all classes of microorganisms including viruses, bacteria, mycoplasma, protozoa and rickettsia. Moreover, they are used against multicellular parasites e.g. worms. Vaccines are also available for all sec-

tors of spring. New born animals are also vaccinated to confer immunity and prevent livestock losses later in life.

Veterinary vaccines also play a part in human health. Diseases like Rift Valley fever and Rabies which can spread to human beings can be prevented in animals by use of vaccines. Vaccines have also been responsible for eradication of some diseases e.g. small pox in humans and rinderpest in animals.

In conclusion the important role of vaccines in promotion of animal health cannot be ignored and greater emphasis needs to be placed on their use. Education to agro vets on storage and sale together with farmer education on their use is needed.



Giving a jab to a dog

The Partnership between VSA and KVA

Wherever you see KVA, you won't miss VSA. The Kenya Veterinary Association and the Veterinary Students Association have had very close partnership especially in events organized by the KVA. In some instances, we have had people asking whether one is a subsidiary of the other. VSA members have always participated and attended conferences organized by KVA some of which include: The World Veterinary Day Conference on 28th September 2010, Mombasa, The World Veterinary Day Conference in Kisumu from 27-29th and The World Veterinary Day Conference in Machakos on 28th September, 2011 not forgetting the recent World Veterinary Day held at Safari-park Hotel which began by the 50th anniversary Jubilee celebration at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences. During all these conferences the VSA members have always paid subsidized conference fees courtesy of the KVA. This has greatly helped the veterinary students to gain knowledge in the veterinary profession and interact with people from all circles of life in the veterinary profession. There are those who have been able to meet their employees through such interactions. This is so because getting a job is not all about the grades but also networking. KVA has greatly helped the undergraduates in creating links with the job market enabling most of them secure employment upon completion of their course.

Furthermore, KVA provides for free membership of veterinary student upon graduation provided the student was a member of the Veterinary Students Association. This allows veterinary graduates to become members of the professional association which addresses issues affecting veterinarians. The most recent role KVA has played was the pushing for parliament to pass the Veterinary Surgeons and Veterinary Paraprofessionals Bill which was passed by parliament and consequently ascended by the president into law.



Lunch session during the KVA world veterinary day conference in Kisumu attended by VSA members.



Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and MP for Naivasha Mr. John Mututho addressing KVA members during the World Veterinary Day celebrations held in Kisumu 27th April 2011. An event which was also attended by VSA members.



Some of the VSA members who attended the KVA conference in Kisumu.

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VSA Officials



*Front from left
(2012/2013)*

*Jeff Kyalo, Bore John,
Jaffery Jabir,*

*Kwoba Emma, Geoffrey
Mwangi,*

Kevin Osore

*Behind from left
(2011/2012)*

*Richard Tanui, Odhiambo
Sammy,*

*Topisia Kipetwan, Tare
Philip,*

My life in Vet School

The transition

Admission to the university can be good news one would like to share in the village and worth a consideration of an achievement but the fact is that though the university materials are perceived to know much, that is not always the case with “freshers”. Many will be coming to Nairobi for the first time and are much less acquainted with the university lifestyles.

The hurdle of career choice

I would say veterinary is my profession. I love it but I enjoyed teaching. After my KCSE exam I got a chance to teach in a newly opened high school in our home place; a chance that is rarely missed by many form four leavers. Luckily enough, I got promoted to serve as the deputy principal even in the presence of qualified university graduates whom I thought they deserved far much better than I did. **What a great favor!** My interest in becoming a teacher gradually developed and reached its peak at the time of my admission to the university. Many people whom I am sure understood <5% about veterinary persistently urged me to do an interfaculty transfer immediately I got to the university.of course I did and qualified to transfer but I didn't move.

The mistaken institute

In the day of registration I set off to Nairobi for the first time, I persistently urged the driver to drop me at the Kabete flyover, but unfortunately forgot and I reminded him when we were past the police station. I alighted and was so happy when I saw Kabete technical training institute, I thought that was the institution I was admitted to, I got there and waited for 30 minutes for somebody to get out of the office. I got in and was informed by a lady that I was in the wrong place because they were not expecting any students to report on that date. I got out worried and went to the neighboring AHITI. I was rudely rebuked by a security woman who harshly told me that am not allowed to see anybody at that time but I humbly answered her that I needed not to see someone but reported for registration. She realized that I was lost after some description of upper Kabete campus. She directed me but I couldn't find my way and I ended up in the central vet labs. I luckily met a lady who was coming to campus and I followed her with a lot of relieve.

I reached to the registration desk late, they were closing and I begun to wonder where to sleep but the existence of the orientation team is indeed indispensable. I slept in Wakulima Hostel room 5 and in the following day I got early and got registered and headed to prefabs to be given a room. Luckily I got it.

Topisia Kipetwan

When Students Would Rather Copy and Paste *(From one local daily newspaper)*

The culture of plagiarism is spreading faster than never before among University and college students, leaving academicians worried about the fate of learning and the danger the future leaders are exposing themselves to.

Earlier this year, a university in Hungary stripped the country's President of a doctorate degree after a team of academicians found that he had plagiarized a large chunk of material for a thesis he did 20 years ago on the Olympics. In a report detailing the matter, the academicians were even more concerned about the failure by the University of Physical Education to (UPE) to notice the plagiarism.

These concerns, although raised in a distant land, are worth paying attention to.

Two lecturers we recently discussing term papers and theses and the copy-paste culture that the students have adopted.

The discussion was something like the excerpt below (the names are fictitious)

Prof X: I am not looking forward to reading the rest of my student's term papers.

I have already read four identical papers, complete with the comas, full stops and even errors in content. Everything is copied word for word, and all plagiarized from the same source.

Dr. Y: That is extremely a poor showing on the students' part. It means one of them plagiarized the article and the rest simply copied. You know what? It not only happens among undergraduates, but across all levels.

Prof X: That reminds me of a masters student who handed in her thesis proposal with the internet links scattered throughout the document. Another student brought in a thesis with acknowledgement addressed to a different university.

Dr. Y: There are many ways in which students present similar work without being caught. There are bureaus ready to sell whatever students want for their course work. A masters thesis goes for something like Sh. 30,000 while a doctoral piece is obtainable for between Sh50,000 and Sh100,000. it all depends on what you want and the amount you have.

Prof X: That sounds like an auction bid!

Dr. Y: Now what happens to your four students?

Prof X: I will read out to them some of the articles about Hungary's president having his doctorate degree of 20years revoked on grounds that he plagiarized material for his thesis. I will then ask them to think hard about it. **(By the Editor)**

A brief History of the World Veterinary

The World Veterinary Association evolved from a meeting in Hamburg, Germany, in 1863, which was convened by Professor John Gamgee of the Veterinary College of Edinburgh. He invited veterinarians from across Europe to a conference to discuss epizootic diseases and ways to control and prevent them. This was the first International Veterinary Congress, which later became known as the World Veterinary Congress. In Hungary, Budapest, in 1906, at the 8th World Veterinary Congress, it was decided an organizational link between Congresses was needed, and the Permanent Committee was formed to serve that purpose.

In 1953, at the 15th Congress in Stockholm, Sweden, members decided to create an international organization. The Permanent Committee worked to develop the Constitution of the World Veterinary Association. This was presented at the 16th Congress in 1959, held in Madrid, Spain, and the World Veterinary Association was founded. Today this association works with other international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Office of Epizootics (OIE), and the World Health Organization (WHO). The organization's efforts focus on animal health and welfare, public health, and the environment.

The World Veterinary Association (WVA) is comprised of national veterinary associations from countries around the world, as well as international associations of veterinary specialists. After much consultation with member nations, its organization was restructured in 1996 in an attempt to more effectively reflect its constituency, with a new constitution adopted at the General Assembly in 1997. Instead of an executive committee made up of seven regional vice-presidents, its main bodies now are the President's Assembly, the Council, and the Executive Committee. The President's Assembly (PA) replaced the former General Assembly. It consists of the presidents of all the member associations and directs policy for the WVA. It meets at the World Veterinary Congress, or more often if a special meeting is called. The Council is made up of regional representatives and members from the specialist groups. It is responsible for implementing policy from the PA and operating on its behalf in the years between Congresses. It meets annually. The Executive Committee (EXCOM) is composed of the President and the two Vice-Presidents. It answers to the Council and handles the daily business of the WVA, meeting twice annually and communicating more often through telephone conferences.

Members of the WVA come from more than seventy nations around the world. The national veterinary association of each country is responsible for paying membership fees for the number of veterinarians in that association. Developing nations, and those suffering economic hardship (as determined by Gross National Product), may be offered reduced membership rates at the discretion of the Council. There is a fixed minimum and maximum fee for both national and associate members. A member association in arrears will be unable to vote, host a World Veterinary Congress, or nominate members

for elected office or a seat on the Council. Their representatives in the President's Assembly will not be eligible for nomination to office or Council.

The goals of the WVA include maintaining and expanding its position as the recognized representative of the global veterinary profession, able to represent all the aspects of this field. It aims to do this by enhancing communication both within the veterinary profession, and between itself, the general public, and regulatory bodies. The organization would like to increase its number of members, and improve mass media relations both within the veterinary profession and with the general public. Leaders of the organization should have credibility and authority. The WVA intends to respond to contemporary issues of relevance to the profession, and to be capable of advising veterinary professionals as well as regulatory bodies and members of the general public. The volunteers who lead the organization must be competent and motivated to act in the best interests of the veterinary profession. The WVA will continue to supervise the organization of the World Veterinary Congresses in addition to promoting regional veterinary science events, as well as developing policies related to veterinary science that will be of interest to the general public. The WVA intends to promote and develop partnerships and coalitions to further its policies. To accomplish all this, the WVA must be financially stable, ensuring its capability in the future. The WVA, in 2001, began celebrating World Veterinary Day on the last Saturday of April. It is intended to promote the work of veterinary professionals from all over the world as they work to improve human and animal welfare, food safety, practices of animal transport and quarantine, the environment, and environmental conservation and protection. World Veterinary Day is themed every year, with veterinary professionals doing what they can in their own localities. In 2011, the theme was "Rabies". This was observed in many countries by vaccinating and spaying or neutering dogs, as well as presentations and discussions on the prevention and control of rabies. Previous themes have included "One World, One Health: More Cooperation between Veterinarians and Physicians" (2010), and "Veterinarians and Livestock Farmers: A Winning Partnership" (2009).

2011 was World Veterinary Year, celebrating the founding of the first veterinary school in 1761 in Lyon, France, by the French veterinarian Claude Bourgelat. This was essentially the start of the veterinary profession as well as the beginning of comparative bio-pathology. It has been celebrated by veterinary professionals and organizations around the world, including the WVA, an associate member of the Executive Council of Vet2011. One of the primary functions of the WVA since its inception has been the holding of World Veterinary Congresses. These used to be held every four years, but now occur every other year in a different country. Veterinary professionals from around the world are encouraged to attend. At the most recent Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, the theme was "Caring for Animals: Healthy Communities," focusing on safety and security in food production and on disease control.

VSA farmer's outreach programmes

The Veterinary Students Association has always organized an annual farmers' outreach programmes in conjunction with the Clinical studies department. This entails going out to the field and providing herd health services to farmers free of charge. It is mainly aimed at improving the production in the livestock sector because most farmers cannot afford the cost of veterinary services due to poverty.

The high cost of veterinary services has contributed to the decline in animal production in Kenya. Therefore, VSA decided that part of its mandate should be helping farmers by providing the services free of charge as away of encouraging farmers to continues with animal production which plays a very vital role in economic development. This is based on the fact livestock production contributes greatly to the GDP of Kenya and is also a source of livelihood to many Kenyans especially those in Arid and Semi-arid Lands (ASAL).

We also partner with stakeholders who greatly provide support in terms of drugs and other veterinary equipment required for usual clinical work. Some of our main partners whom we cannot fail to recognize include: Cooper K Brands Ltd, Norbrook, Twiga chemical Industries, Highchem Ltd, Cosmos among others.

During the field days, we usually carry out clinical work which include de-worming, treatment of the day's cases, vaccination, surgical procedure where it deems necessary and also provide consultation services. Farmers education is also part of our activities. We teach and train farmers on various aspect of

animal production some of which include: heat detection, importance of Artificial insemination, feeding programmes, detection and handling of mastitis in dairy herds and early reporting of disease to relevant veterinary authorities. These activities are done under the supervision of clinicians from the clinical department who always accompany the veterinary students.

From the correspondence we have received, many farmers have greatly benefited from our outreach programmes and those in areas where veterinary services are hard to come by now feel they have been greatly honoured. Farmers who have always neglected seeking veterinary services have now appreciated the importance of consulting a veterinarian in case of any problem affecting their animals.

The choice of the are to visit depends on various factors. Some of them include: distance to be covered, the accessibility, the number of livestock farmers in the area and the number of animals kept. We also consider regional balancing. For instance, we have to ensure that we cover many areas throughout the country and not only focus in one area.

We are in the process of looking for more partners and sponsors to enable us expand our area of coverage and if possible have two field per academic year instead of the usual one. We also aim to convince many farmers to take up the new advanced technologies such as embryo transfer in order to increase their productivity.

Jabir Jaffery O. (Chairman)

Many discussions and workshops were held to provide opportunities for further professional education, including such diverse topics as responsible use of antimicrobials, predator control, anesthesia of large African animals, and epidemiologic outbreaks in different animal populations.

The World Veterinary Association has existed in one form or another for almost 150 years, striving to unite and educate veteri-

nary professionals from all countries for the benefit of animals, people, and the environment. The escalating pace of travel and communication globally will present more and more challenges to all medical professions, and human reliance on animals for food, labor, and companionship is only likely to increase with the global population. The World Veterinary Association continuously works to improve its organization to remain relevant and effective in a rapidly changing future. *Long life WVA!*

Thoughts on re-claiming Kenya's Livestock Sector and the pivotal role of the Kenya Veterinary Board.

The passage of the Veterinary Surgeons and Para-Professional ACT 2011 into law in December 2011, heralds a new dawn in the veterinary practice in Kenya. Coming only months after the promulgation of the new constitution and at a time the country is engulfed in the reform mood; this development could not have come at a better time. There are those who cried foul over its passage; but majority of folks agree it is a good law that has the potential to streamline this country's livestock sector to unimaginable magnitudes. To all those of you who have misgivings with one or two clauses; I believe there shall be forums in the future where your issues can be addressed. Need be, the law can be reviewed with the objective of incorporating some of your views.

I have some kind words for the Kenya Veterinary Board. This is a body that has been tasked with the daunting task of ensuring that Kenyans reap the full benefits of this law. As you may be aware, the livestock sector in Kenya has been in a state of anarchy for as much as I can remember. The animals and farmers have been left at the mercies of every Tom, Dick and Harry who unfortunately as I am going to illustrate below hardly have any mercy left. Consequently, everyone is looking up to you to bring sanity to the livestock sector once and for all.

I hope you shall be vicious enough to unravel some the ominous tricks and tactics that veterinary practitioners in the field have devised to rob their clients in broad daylight. Under your watch, these kind of guys should have no where to hide. A case in point are the practitioners I met 'under dosing' animals during a foot and mouth disease vaccination campaign. Instead of administering 2ml of the vaccine, they were injecting less or nothing at all. To add insult to injury, the vaccine could be over diluted several times with dirty water so that they could pocket the extra cash they were levying the farmers. In order to make their theft more credible and authentic they had stamped receipt books.

The picture that I came face to face with, at Kinamba area in Naivasha, will linger in my mind for a long time to come. I saw a number of donkeys with fresh wounds on various parts of their bodies being forced to draw large drums of water. As the donkeys snaked trying tooth and nail to pull the carts, their legs could give way, exhausted and amid excruciating pain, they could stop from time to time. At that point, they were whipped at the very spots they had wounds. The people were so unkind to their animals and the menacing brutality they exhibited can not be rivaled.

I also suppose you shall revive all the fallen laboratory diagnostic centres across the country, refurbish existing ones and build other world class animal disease investigation centres to help in the diagnosis and surveillance of diseases. The objective should be to wipe out diseases and create disease free zones. If achieved, this will go along way in opening up new markets for Kenya's livestock products a scenario that will translate to employment creation and high standards of living for the Kenyan livestock keepers.

In your role of registering and regulating institutions offering veterinary related courses, I hope you shall endeavor to discharge your mandate without fear or favour. I hope you shall uphold the values that are treasured world over like love, honesty, humility, courage, hard work and transparency. I believe you shall rise to the occasion and deregister institutions and veterinary practitioners who engage in malpractices. Let us once and for all extract from our midst individuals who soil the name of this noble profession.

A vibrant livestock sector will also require a cordial and close working relationship between various stakeholders i.e. veterinary surgeons, para-professionals, farmers, pharmaceutical companies and other players in the industry. Your role in upholding these linkages will be integral. You should from the onset endeavor to bring everyone on board and to inform them of the paradigm shift in the veterinary arena with the coming of this new law.

The writer is a fourth year bachelor of veterinary medicine student, University of Nairobi; Email: philiponyono@gmail.com.

VSA Field Day pictorial



Pictorial representation of some of the activities carried out during the previous field days organized by VSA in various parts of the Country.

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THE ROLE OF THE VETERINARY MEDICINE PROFESSION IN PREVENTING ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND PROTECTING HUMAN HEALTH IN KENYA

The Kenyan Veterinary profession has a stringent role in dealing with developments in human-environment interface ensuring the unification in achieving the Kenya vision 2030 with respect to the economic and social pillar, in an increasingly globalised world, in which there are new methods of production, a new and changing relationship between humans, animals and increasingly complex and global problems.

Veterinarians in all aspects of profession have an opportunity and responsibility to mitigate the complex emerging environmental pollution problems and protect the health and well-being of people in all that they do, including protecting food security and safety; addressing threats to antibiotic sensitivity; preventing and controlling zoonotic emerging infectious diseases; protecting environments and ecosystems; promotion of animal health, improve production and productivity; participating in bio and agro-terrorism preparedness and response; using their skills to confront non-zoonotic diseases (e.g. malaria, HIV/AIDS, vaccine preventable diseases, chronic diseases and injuries); strengthening the public-health infrastructure; and advancing medical science through research.

The veterinarians have the responsibility of maintaining hygiene and animal health standards in primary and secondary production and ensuring fair trade. This is envisioned in making Kenya a globally competitive prosperous nation with a high quality of life by 2030.

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Veterinary profession, my Inspiration

The number one reason I love being a veterinarian is be-



cause I can help people and animals. As a child, I always knew I wanted to be a vet, but I didn't really know why. Sure, I thought it was because I loved animals and wanted to help them. How many young vets-to-be pictures

a poor puppy dog with a broken leg, and think, "I want to save him!"

Not surprisingly, Veterinary Medicine is so much more than helping that poor puppy with a broken leg. It's medicine. It's an art. And, for right or wrong, it's a business. A veterinarian can't provide quality medical care if he/she doesn't charge appropriately for it. If the practice isn't run like a business—if it's run like a subsidized clinic providing low-cost or even free care because the staff "just wants to help"—then no one can make a living, and the people who love animals so much will be forced into other professions where they *can* make a living.

My point with this apparent digression is, there's a person attached to that animal. And in order to help the animal, you have to help that person understand what's wrong and how you can help. It is this exchange that allows me to learn so much about people, and humanity, and to be thankful for my opportunity to help. Because during these conversations about diagnostic and treatment options for a family's beloved, sick parrot, I feel the anguish. I feel the love. I feel the anxiety about the uncertainty of the outcome. I don't just want to help the parrot (or whatever the patient may be)—I want to help that family get their pet back. And if it's not in the cards, and I can't save the pet, then you can bet your life that those children will remember what comes next for the rest of their life. My purpose then becomes one of guidance. I want them to remember how kindly and gently their pet was treated, that their vet really does love this pet too, and that we're saying good-bye *because* we love him so much.

It's true, there are times when you can hear me say, "I hate people." But the real reason I love veterinary medicine is because I do love people, and their animals. If I didn't, I would be in the wrong profession.

Dr. Kimeli Peter (BVM, MSc. Vet Surgery Cont.)

DO CATS DREAM OR CATNAP?

A lot of people wonder whether cats dream. That's easy to answer- of course they do, Cats are mammals, like us, and need sleep to rest their minds and bodies. It's believed that the bodies' natural state is in sleep. We stay awake only through constant neural activity within the brain region called the reticular activating system. When we or our cats are tired, we lie down, preferably in a quiet dark room, close our eyes and sleep comes. The reason this happens is because we have shut down the 50% of afferent (inward) bombardment that comes from muscle tension, and have effectively curtailed the auditory and visual stimulation.

In other words when we are fully relaxed, lying down, and not listening or looking at anything, you fall asleep. We all know this, which is why we go to bed, in the evening, turn off the radio, draw the curtains and turn off the light. We just don't know why we are doing it and neither does the cat know his pre-sleep preparation measures, we both do what we have because it works.

STAGES OF SLEEP.

The first phase of sleep cats and people go through is called light slow wave sleep (LSWS). During this phase the electroencephalogram (EEG) demonstrates slow modulating brain waves, but the cat is not fully relaxed and is easily roused. Next comes deep slow wave sleep (DSWS) in which the EEG slows further and the cat becomes progressively more limp and is harder to rouse. Finally there's paradoxical rapid eye movement (REM) sleep which the EEG becomes extremely active once more, as if the cat is awake, and yet the body is profoundly relaxed.

This latter sleep is sometimes referred to as sleep of the body. Certainly the mind is getting no rest. It's at this most difficult-to-wake stage of sleep that dreaming occurs. Human's awakened from REM sleep report that they have been dreaming. The fact that the bodies' muscles are relaxed does not mean that occasional movements cannot occur and is quite common to see cats twitching or contracting their toes during REM sleep, as if they are experiencing some mental chase. Cat sleep patterns are very much like our own. They spend about 10 hours a day asleep. Mostly at night, and during this time cycle from LSWS to REM and back just over 80% of their time asleep takes the form of SWS with the balance REM sleep.

THE SEROTONIN CONNECTION

Although serotonin is known as the brain chemical involved in mood and is the one targeted by anti-depressants like prozac^R, its main function appears to be in organizing muscular activity. During LSWS when the EEG is slowly undulating and the body is still in somewhat tonic state, serotonin neurons are still active. Not just as active as when the cat is wide awake, but active nonetheless. When REM sleep arrives, the EEG becomes active, muscle tone is absent and serotonin neurons absent. You can ask yourself how a cat can display rapid eye movement or limbs twitching during this stage of sleep. The answer is quite simple; serotonin neurons supply muscles that control large antigravity muscles and not those that control episodic behavior and fine movements such as muscle that control the eye position and movement of digits.

THE CATNAP

A catnap is what we see when a cat is in light wave sleep and serotonin neurons are active enough to maintain a considerable muscle tone. The cat's mind is blank at this time and EEG demonstrates an anaesthetized pattern, yet he is able to maintain eyes closed, limbs tucked posture. This represents the "sleep of the mind" during which there's no dreaming. If we fall asleep in a chair, people say we are catnapping, and the term is most appropriate.

TO SLEEP PERCHANCES TO DREAM

Although they sleep mainly at night, cats are crepuscular rather than truly diurnal like us. Crepuscular refers to their tendency to be most active during dawn and dusk when their prey would normally be most active, with periods of snoozing and sleeping in between times of peak activity. And if we or our cats become totally relaxed, with our eyes darting back and forth, we are likely dreaming. The subject matter of dreams, however probably reflects species specific preoccupations, with us more focused on our hobbies and interests and them dreaming of an easy-to-catch mouse.

Korir Philemon

VSA-Academic Director

MEDICAL JOKES

Artery.....	The study of paintings.
Bacteria.....	Back door to a cafeteria.
Barium.....	What doctors do when patients die.
Benign.....	What you be after you be eight
Cesarean Section.....	A neighborhood in Rome.
CTscan.....	Searching for kitty.
Cauterize.....	Made eye contact with her.
Colic.....	A sheep dog.
Coma.....	A punctuation mark.
D & C.....	Where Washington is.
Dilate.....	To live long.
Enema.....	Not a friend.
Fester.....	Quicker than someone else.
Fibula.....	A small lie.
Genital.....	Non-Jewish person.
G.I.Series.....	World Series of military baseball.
Hangnail.....	What you hang your coat on.
Impotent.....	Distinguished, well known.
Labor Pain.....	Getting hurt at work.
Medical Staff.....	A doctor's cane.
Morbid.....	A higher offer than I bid.
Nitrates.....	Cheaper than day rates.
Node.....	I knew it.
Outpatient.....	A person who has fainted.
Pap Smear.....	A fatherhood test.
Pelvis.....	Second cousin to Elvis.
Post Operative.....	A letter carrier.
Recovery Room.....	Place to do upholstery.
Rectum.....	Darn near killed him.
Secretion.....	Hiding something.
Seizure.....	Roman emperor.
Tablet.....	A small table.
Terminal Illness.....	Getting sick at the airport.
Tumor.....	More than one.
Urine.....	Opposite of you're out

Veterinary medicine students experience higher depression levels than their peers, research finding.....

— Veterinary medicine students are more likely to struggle with depression than human medicine students, undergraduate students and the general population, according to several recent collaborative studies from Kansas State University researchers. Mac Hafen, therapist and clinical instructor in K-State's College of Veterinary Medicine, and researchers

from K-State, the University of Nebraska and East Carolina University decided to take a closer look at depression and anxiety among veterinary medical students. Although the mental health of human medicine students has been extensively studied, the same extent of study has not been performed with veterinary medicine students. Additionally, most veterinary research related to depression involves pet owners, not veterinarians or students.

"We are hoping to predict what contributes to depression levels so that we can intervene and make things run a little bit more smoothly for students themselves," said Hafen, who has spent five years researching the well-being and mental health of veterinary students.

Once a semester, the researchers anonymously surveyed veterinary medicine students in various stages of academic study. The survey helped uncover a rate of depression occurrence and understand how it related to the amount of stress veterinary students experience during their four years of study.

During the first year of veterinary school, 32 percent of the veterinary medicine students surveyed showed symptoms of depression, compared to 23 percent of human medicine students who showed symptoms above the clinical cutoff, as evidenced by other studies.

The researchers also discovered that veterinary students experience higher depression rates as early as the first semester of their first year of study. Their depression rates appear to increase even more during the second and third year of school. During the fourth year, depression rates drop down to first-year levels.

Hafen said several factors might contribute to the higher rate of depression in veterinary medicine students. Veterinarians deal with stressors that human medicine doctors do not have to experience, such as frequently dis-

cussing euthanasia with clients. Although both programs of study are intense, veterinarians must understand a variety of animal species rather than focusing on the human body. Struggles with balancing work, school and life could also lead to higher depression rates.

Hafen said gender differences could also play a role, although such claims are inconclusive so far. Whereas medical schools are nearly split evenly between male and female students, about 75 percent of veterinary medicine students are female. National studies indicate that women are two to three times more likely than men to suffer from mood disorders. The research team's studies found several other factors connected with higher depression occurrence, including: homesickness; uncertainty about academic expectations; a feeling of not belonging or not fitting in; and perceived physical health. The researchers had students rate their own physical health to indicate how they felt about their overall health. Students who were happier with their physical health had lower depression rates.

But the studies contain more than just negative news; they offer interventions and ways that veterinary schools and their faculty and staff can help students struggling with depression and anxiety. Some of these ways include:

- Having clearer expectations of veterinary students, especially during the first year.
- Sponsoring events and organizations that help improve physical health.

Empathizing with students and their concerns about their studies.

The researchers are optimistic that by helping veterinary medicine students care for their own mental health, these students become better prepared to help clients.

From Daily Science. Korir D.K.

ONE HEALTH: CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

By Dr. Andrew G. Thaiyah, PhD

OHCEA, National coordinator and focal person (Veterinary)

Kenya country office

Introduction

One health represents an interdisciplinary strategy to address health from a holistic integrated perspective rather than a discipline-based fragmented perspective. It encompasses the working together of different disciplines in the surveillance and control of diseases. It also hopes to change the management of diseases from a discipline based perspective to a multidiscipline approach.

Why the One Health Approach?

Firstly, the different parts / perspectives are connected and addressing one part affects others. Secondly, the traditional problem-solving methodology using single disciplines doesn't work as it downplays the role of other stakeholders. Thirdly, traditional training programs often lack the practical, field-based skill building needed for effective work at the interface.

What is the one health approach?

"The collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, na-

tionally and globally to attain optimal locally, nationally and globally to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment" (American Veterinary Medical Association, 2008)

The One health approach recognizes:

The interdependence of, and seeks to improve human, animal and environmental health

That communication, collaboration and trust between human and animal health practitioners is at the heart of the One Health concept

The importance of other disciplines such as economics and social behavior that are essential to success

The need to promote the 'doable' such as improving surveillance and response for emerging infectious diseases whilst developing the broader approach

That community participation and development of community capacity is critical for success

That understanding ecosystems, including molecular eco-biology, are an essential part of One Health.

That One Health is a major component of food security and Safety

Groupings for need for OH include:

1. Infectious Diseases
2. Non Communicable diseases
3. Zoonotic diseases
4. Epi- Zoonotic disease

5. Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases

6. Environmental Health

Neglected tropical diseases: Trypanosomiasis, Schistosomiasis and Leishmaniasis

One Health Opportunities:

New ways of thinking about issues through multi-disciplinary views

Better management of complex problems

Capture creative ideas and innovations to increase disease outbreak response capacity

One health in Central and Eastern Africa (OHCEA)

OHCEA is a USAID RESPOND funded project on One Health (OH) under the emerging pandemic threats (EPT) program and brings together schools of veterinary medicine and public health in East and Central Africa with Minnesota and Tufts universities in USA. The countries involved include Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia and democratic republic of Congo. In total 14 institutions are involved. This program seeks to transform health professionals to better prepare meet the challenges of emerging and re-emerging diseases.

Dr. Thaiya is the head of Medicine in the Clinical Studies department, faculty of Veterinary Medicine, UoN.

Dairy industry in Kenya has undergone tremendous improvement since introduction of exotic breeds through the Swynerton plan of early 1950's and the Africans be allowed to practice dairy farming. Due to increased population and the small pieces of land the sector has taken a new dimension, currently 60% of dairy practice in Kenya is by the small holder farmers(Ashitandi 1997)

The annual milk production in the country stands at about 4.06 billion litres (*courtesy of KDB*) and of these 2.1 billion liters of milk is marketed formally and informally. The amount of milk going through processing plants increased to 516 million litres in 2010.

The dairy sector has also contributed significantly to the gross domestic product of the country, currently at 8%. The sector provides 1.5 million employment opportunity to small holder farms and 500,000 direct jobs in milk transportation and further 750,000 in related support services.

Cattle population in the country was shown during the 2009 census of which the distribution was as follows:-

Rift valley.....	43%
North eastern.....	16%
Eastern.....	13%
Nyanza.....	10%
Coast.....	6%
Central.....	6%
Western.....	6%
Nairobi.....	0%

The only problem is that they did not give the breakdown of how many dairy breeds is currently in the country.

CONSTRAINTS TO DAIRY SECTOR IN KENYA

High cost of animal feeds: The prices of animal feeds keeps fluctuating as a result in changes experienced due to the global oil prices, therefore this cost is passed on to the consumer and thus hurts the sector dearly.

Diseases e.g. mastitis has led to production losses and even death of the animals.

Unfavorable weather: In Kenya there are seasons of extreme drought and therefore the dairy sector is affected mostly leading to reduced milk production.

Inadequate dairy facilities: In Kenya there are few dairy processing plants and therefore in times of surplus milk

these plants could not handle all the milk leading to wastage of milk due to its perishability.

Low milk prices: Raw milk price is low compared to the price of the finished milk products thus the farmers cannot maximize their production strengths.

The government has a major role to play as far as these challenges are concerned. This can be done by making veterinary services affordable to the dairy farmers, provision of incentives to farmers, improved infrastructure such as roads and construction of more processing plants with good storage facilities to prevents wastage when the production is high. This will avert cases where farmers are forced to pour milk as we have witnessed in recent years.

PROSPECTS OF THE DAIRY SECTOR

Currently the dairy sector in Kenya is bound to improve more due to development of more cooling plants whereby farmers can hold their milk as they search for the buyer. Also the decentralization of veterinary extension services is a great boost to milk producers as they will be able to get the services faster than usual.

The coming up of NGOs e.g. EADD, HEIFER INTERNATIONAL e.t.c. to assist the farmers in improvement of the dairy sector through their extension services and provision of funds to buy dairy equipment.

Insurance companies have also developed a livestock policy whereby the owners can insure their high producing animals in case of any calamity.

Microfinance institutions have also contributed greatly in the sector by giving loans to farmers to buy the animals or the feeds.

The improved breeding services e.g. Artificial insemination whereby the farmer can use the semen of a high quality sire without necessarily having to import the sire.

There have been improved research funding to the livestock sector in that it has been shown that it can alleviate poverty (*courtesy of the standard News paper when Bill Gates visited a farm in Nandi,2010*)

Milk is a major product in the livestock industry and is widely consumed in Kenya and world at large, but this has been affected greatly by mastitis which affects the quality and quantity of milk (Omoro 1997,Shitandi 1999)

Mastitis is one of the persistent and widely spread disease conditions of importance to milk hygiene and quality among dairy cattle world wide (schalm 1971,Blood 1983).

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